(b) whether it is proposed to handover the sector to private airlines, if the airlines is short of aircrafts;

(c) whether it is a fact that fare reduction in air operation is given to other States of the country except North-Eastern States; and

(d) if so, what is the reason for such disparity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government has laid down route dispersal guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services to different regions of the country. As such, all airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance of route dispersal guidelines issued by the Government.

(c) and (d) Government does not regulate airfares. Airlines charge their fares according to their commercial judgement. Indian Airlines' fares applicable in the North East are on an average approximately 6% lower than the rest of India. Promotional pricing is also offered on sectors to/ from Silchar by Indian Airlines.

Expansion of Delhi airport

1367. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to expand the Delhi airport;

(b) whether this would solve the problem of congestion at the airport; and

(c) how would Government tackle the problem of fog this winter and what steps the Ministry has taken to meet this problem this year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Following steps have been taken up by Airports Authority of India to decongest Delhi Airport.

(1) Clearance Delivery Position is established to reduce congestion on tower frequency.

(2) Auto Release Procedures is introduced to make expeditious departures on standard routes.

(3) Decisions have been taken to:—

(i) construct new high speed exit & parallel taxiways.

(ii) introduce Air Traffic Flow Management.

(iii) upgrade Air Traffic Control automation system.

(iv) install Advance Surface Movement & Guidance Control System.

(v) construct Bays for aircraft, rapid exit taxi tracks, parallel taxi tracks.

(vi) carry out modification/expansion of the building.

(vii)construct domestic & international terminals as a part of restructuring & modernisation.

(c) Efforts are continously made to reduce concellation/rescheduling of flights due to fog. Regular meetings have been convened in the ministry of Civil Aviation with the representatives of Airports Authority of India (AAI), Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), India Meteorological Department (IMD), airlines and other agencies. Stress was given to ensure operationalisation of Instrument Landing System (ILS) Cat-IIIB at Delhi Airport by mid of December, 2005. The Advanced Surveillance Movement Guidance & Control System (ASMGCS) installed at Delhi airport is under testing and expected to be operational by 15th December, 2005.

Aviation University at Madurai

1368. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any request from the State Government of Tamil Nadu for setting up an Aviation University at Madurai, Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the University would impart training to pilots, engineers, air traffic control personnel and in disciplines linked with aviation;

(d) if so, whether this subject was discussed at a recent meeting between Planning Commission and US Secretary of Transport;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and